

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 SS-15

H-02 /057 W

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R 091710Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6691

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

FAA BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US

SUBJ: CIVAIR: CONCORDE

1. REUTERS REPORTED JAN. 7 THAT ON HIS RETURN TO PARIS CALUDE ABRAHAM OF SGAC, WHO HEADED FRENCH DEL TO COLEMAN HEARING JAN. 5 IN WASHINGTON, SAID GOF WOULD CONSIDER PARTIAL AUTHORIZATION OF CONCORDE SERVICE BY USG A BAD DECISION AND EXPERIMENTAL SOLUTION AN UNACCEPTABLE ONE. REUTERS DISPATCH NOTES "EXPERIMENTAL" REFERS TO RUMORS USG MIGHT AUTHORIZE PROBATIONARY SIX MONTH LANDING RIGHTS AT DULLES.

2. IN INTERVIEW ON LATE EVENING TV NEWSCAST JAN. 7, STATE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION CAVAILLE SAID "PARTIAL" AUTHORIZATION BY USG WOULD BE "UNACCEPTABLE". CAVAILLE ALSO SAID THAT REASON HE HIMSELF DID NOT GO TO WASHINGTON TO TESTIFY AT COLEMAN HEARING WAS BECAUSE GOF CONSIDERED AIR FRANCE APPLICATION WAS "TECHNICAL" MATTER WHICH SHOULD BE HANDLED AT TECHNICAL LEVEL.

3. SINCE CAVAILLE REMARKDS WERE NOT PICKED UP THERE-
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AFTER BY AFP OR NEWSPAPERS, WE QUERIED CAVAILLE'S

CABINET WHETHER WRITTEN TEXT WAS AVAILABLE TO WHICH WE COULD REFER RATHER THAN RELYING ON OUR RECOLLECTION OF CAVAILLE REMARKS ON TV. WE WERE TOLD THAT CAVAILLE HAD SPOKEN EXTEMPORANEOUSLY AND NOT FROM WRITTEN TEXT, AND WHAT HE HAD "MEANT" WAS THAT GOF WOULD CONSIDER PARTIAL AUTHORIZATION ,E.G., LIMITED TO DULLES OR IN TIME, AS "DISCRIMINATORY" MEASURE BY USG.

4. COMMENT: CAVAILLE'S CONTENTION THAT ISSUE OF US LANDING RIGHTS FOR CONCORDE IS "TECHNICAL" MATTER PROBABLY REFLECTS GISCARD LINE (PARIS 426) AGAINST "POLITICIZING" CONCORDE DEBATE. CAVAILLE'S REMARKS ARE OF COURSE NO LESS EQUIVOCAL THAT WERE GISCARD'S, ESPECIALLY SINCE POSSIBLE DISCRIMINATION TO WHICH CAVAILLE THEN ALLUDED WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE FAR MORE THAN "TECHNICAL" IMPLICATIONS FOR GOF. AND FACT THAT CAVAILLE NONETHELESS DOES NOT HESITATE TO SPEAK OUT OT SERVE NOTICE AS OF NOW ON WHAT GOF WOULD FIND ACCEPTABLE FURTHER BELIES CLAIM GOF IS NOT SEEKING TO "POLITICIZE"THE ISSUE. IT MAY BE THAT GISCARD LINE WHICH CAVAILLE ECHOED, AND DECISION NOT TO SEND CAVAILLE TO TESTIFY AT JANUARY 5 HEARING, WERE CONTINGENCY MEASURES DESIGNED AVERT LOSS OF FACE FOR GOF AND THUS GIVE IT GREATER LATITUDE IN TRYING TO LIMIT DAMAGE TO OVER-ALL US-FRANCE RELATIONS IN THE EVENT THAT USG DECISION IS NEGATIVE IN WHOLE OR IN PART. HOWEVER, IT MIGHT BE DANGEROUS TO SPECULATE TOO FAR IN THAT DIRECTION AT THIS STATE.

5. BRUNEAU OF CAVAILLE'S STAFF INFORMS US THAT FRENCH DEL WAS MOST IMPRESSED WITH SECRETARY COLEMAN'S CONDUCT OF JAN 5 HEARING AND FELT THAT NET EFFECT OF PROCEEDINGS MAY HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO CONCORDE'S CHANCES. HOWEVER, HE SAID, FACT THAT US PRESS BY AND LARGE CONTINUED TO BE UNFRIENDLY TOWARDS CONCORDE WAS SUBJECT OF CONTINUING CONCERN.
RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, AIR TRAFFIC, LANDING RIGHTS, AIRLINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS00744
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760009-0041
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760169/aaaacjft.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 MAR 2004 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <15 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVAIR: CONCORDE
TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US, FAA, CONCORDE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006